Call to Order

9:35 AM, by IFC President Ralph Wilkerson


Absent:  Rex Campbell, William Lamberson, Teresa Thiel, Richard Wright

Agenda and Minutes

Motion to accept agenda – approved on voice vote

Motion to accept revised November 16, 2005 minutes – approved on voice vote

Reduction of Administrative Costs

A discussion was held on the recent directive from UM System President to reduce administrative costs by 10%. Questions were raised regarding how the cost of administration was calculated, and what costs are allowed to be reduced under the plan.

Additional questions were raised concerning the differential between administrative costs between campuses.

An IFC representative noted that the numbers being used for cost-cutting suggest that the total administrative costs for the university are approximately 10% of the total budget. Assuming this is accurate, the university is very lean in terms of administrative overhead (when compared to groups such as non-profit charitable institutions).

UMKC reported that a faculty senate committee which looks into budget matters has made good progress, although it has been labor intensive. UMR representatives invited the chair of that committee to visit Rolla, to help UMR with a similar initiative.
Administrative Review

Sample policies from other universities were distributed. Currently the UM system has no standards for how administrative reviews are conducted, or how the results are disseminated. The matter was tabled, to allow sufficient time for other business.

Peoplesoft

The IFC received a description of the current status of PeopleSoft, and the plans for the immediate future. An IFC representative noted that when the PeopleSoft effort started, the motivating factor was to reduce cost. The IFC was informed that centralized database efforts such as this always increase, not decrease, costs. The goal of the PeopleSoft effort is to add functionality, not reduce costs.

An IFC representative expressed appreciation for the frank comments, noting this was the first time he had listened to a presentation on PeopleSoft, without feeling flannelled.¹

Meeting location moved to Providence Point

Comments from UM System President

Chancellors have been instructed to produce plans which would result in administrative costs being reduced by 10%. Information on how the target amounts compare to each campuses’ budget was distributed. The reduction targets range from 0.91% to 1.11% of total unrestricted current funds budget, for the four campuses. The UM System reduction target is 2.79%. The funds freed up will be kept on each campus, to be used for strategic initiatives.

Numerous IFC representatives indicated that they feel the administration is already very efficient, and that additional cost cutting will be difficult to implement. The faculty on one campus is actively requesting an additional administrator be added to their campus.

President is cautiously optimistic about how the UM system will fare in the Governor’s January State of the State address.

There are plans to lead the Board of Curators through a development session on tuition.

Campus Reports

UMC
   Pointed out success in the academic achievement, and positive press, received by selected faculty
   New-Parent extension of tenure clock still under discussion
   Extending shared governance to department level still under discussion
   A task force has been assembled on course evaluations

¹ Flannelled - to be in receipt of material which is warm, fuzzy, and insubstantial
Which administrators should be subject to administrative reviews is being discussed
Over budget on repairs and renovation
Plan to focus on the role of economic development at next Board of Curator’s meeting

UMKC
    Receiving reports from a budget review commission
    New Chancellor on-board 12/22/05

UMR
    Encouraged by recent improvements in administration/faculty communication, but
still have some concerns about matters not being formally referred to appropriate groups
in a timely fashion.
    Still investigating instructor-drops, waiting for opinion from UM legal
    Investigating how grade information is used by groups such as pick-a-prof.com, and
considering alternatives
    Asking for Economic Development to be included as part of P&T
    Beginning search for new Provost

UMSL
    Concerns in Nursing, many items not moving quickly
    Faculty have requested twice in the past year, for an additional administrator - only to
be turned down. Most recent cost cutting looks like request will be denied again
    Budget and planning process has improved dramatically - we are actually doing
planning. Example, recently considered additional parking structure, but decided to
postpone it until need is greater.
    Significant improvements have been made in transparency and shared governance.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Submitted by Kurt Kosbar, IFC Secretary